MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

11 FEBRUARY 1983

Israel

Sharon Resignation, Cabinet Decision -- Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon has decided to resign from his post although he will continue to serve in the Cabinet as minister without portfolio, IDF radio reported on 11 February. However, in interviews broadcast earlier by the radio, the energy and justice ministers said they understood that Sharon will resign from the Cabinet as well.

Sharon had earlier announced that he would not resign his post despite the Cabinet's decision to fully adopt the Kana commission's conclusions without distinctions between politicians and the military, Jerusalem radio reported. After Prime Minister Menahem Begin told the Cabinet that the inquiry commission's conclusions must be adopted, Sharon was the only minister to dissent from this view by voting against the resolution.

Following the decision to accept the commission's recommendations, Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Refa'el Eytan issued an order of the day carried by ITIM confirming that the IDF will carry out the Cabinet resolution. Jerusalem radio subsequently reported that Prime Minister Begin will choose Ambassador to the United States Moshe Arens to replace Ari'el Sharon as defense minister.

Explosiion, Bomb Threats -- While the Cabinet was holding its decisive meeting on the results of the Kahan commission a handgrenade exploded amid a group of Peace Now demonstrators outside the prime minister's office, killing one man and wounding nine others, including the son of Interior Minister Yosef Burg, Jerusalem radio reported. In statements broadcast by Jerusalem television and radio, Begin and Sharon condemned the incident in strong terms. Kakh Movement leader Rabai Kahane was subsequently arrested in connection with the explosion, IDF radio noted. A man claiming to be a Kakh member had earlier conveyed false bomb threats to the Tel Aviv police, announcing that boobytrapped cars were parked near the Labor Party and Likud headquarters, according to Jerusalem radio and ITIM reports. Rabbi Kahane's followers had announced to Peace Now demonstrators that their demonstration outside Begin's office would be their last demonstration "without a handgrenade," the radio reported.

Lebanon

Lebanese-Israeli-U.S. Talks -- The Israeli side showed "flexibility" and did not stress its demand for early-warning stations, although it maintained its stance on mutual relations and normalization. Voice of Lebanon radio disclosed in a report on the 10 February talks at Qiryat Shemona. The radio indicated that the Israelis have agreed to drop their demand for early-warning stations in return for an agreement to establish observation posts to be supervised by Lebanese, Israeli, and other personnel. Both the Lebanese and Israeli delegations announced at the end of the talks that differences had been narrowed, according to statements broadcast by the Voice of Lebanon and Jerusalem radio. Jerusalem radio also reported that the subcommittee dealing with ending the state of war had reached an agreement. The Israeli delegation leader stressed in a press statement that Israel wants Lebanon to enjoy absolute sovereignty and total independence in all its territory, the radio noted.

"Much more progress has been made in the talks than some people think" and Israel and Lebanon have come to a better understanding of each other's views, Foreign Minister Elie Salim told a Beirut news conference broadcast by Beirut radio. He reaffirmed Lebanon's opposition to early-warning stations and to the presence of a single Israeli soldier on Lebanese territory and stressed that Lebanon will only negotiate partial withdrawals of foreign forces within the framework of a comprehensive agreement for the liberation of all of Lebanon.

Security -- The Progressive Socialist Party and the Phalangist Lebanese Forces signed a new agreement under IDF auspices to consolidate the recent Druze-Christian cease-fire, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported. The radio also cited unconfirmed reports of Israeli-Syrian artillery exchanges in the Al-Baruk mountain area.

PLO

The PLO has invited 80 Egyptian parliamentarians from the Egyptian "patriotic" forces to attend the forthcoming PNC meeting in Algiers, but it has not invited any Israeli personalities, PNC speaker Khalid al-Fahum announced in a statement reported by KUNA. The PNC will discuss Palestinian unity, national rights, coming political moves in accordance with the Fes resolutions," the importance of Arab solidarity and the establishment of a unified PLO military command, he said. The PNC speaker also noted that the PLO Executive Committee may be expanded in size.

The PLO chose Algiers as the venue for the PNC session because it categorically rejects attempts by "some Arab regimes" to control Palestinian affairs and Algeria is eager to maintain Palestinian independence and does not interfere in the PLO's internal affairs, Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf stated at a press conference reported by Algiers Voice of Palestine radio.

Iran-Iran Conflict

An Iraqi military communique broadcast by Baghdad radio said Iraqi planes and helicopters inflicted heavy losses on Iranian targets in the Maysam sector, but admitted that an Iraqi fighter plane was shot down. Reporting further Iraqi aircraft losses, an Iranian communique carried by Tehran radio claimed that six Iraqi planes have been downed during the latest Iranian offensive. Other Iranian communiques broadcast by the radio said the Iranians inflicted further blows on the Iraquis, killing or wounding over 2,500 soldiers and destroying more than 40 tanks and personnel carriers. However, the Iraqi communique asserted that the Iranians lost 3,140 dead and 16 tanks on 9 February, as well as further heavy losses in battles since then. Some 1,000 Iranian POW's were transferred to the rear, INA reported. Meanwhile, in a revolution anniversary speech broadcast by Tehran radio, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni mocked Iraqi claims that Iran lost up to 15,000 killed in the latest offensive, contending that this is impossible since Iran only sent 4,000 men into the current battle.

Opec

"I see no way out of a price reduction," Shaykh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, Saudi petroleum and mineral affairs minister said in a magazine interview reported by SPA. Expressing optimism that an oil price reduction will expand demand and revive the world economy, Yamani criticized countries that want official prices to remain high in order to sell at a discount.

DAILY REPORT

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KHOMEYNI 10 FEB MESSAGE TO REVOLUTION CEREMONY

LD110019 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 10 Feb 83

[Excerpts] A glorious ceremony was held in Tehran this afternoon, the purpose of which was to pay tribute to the services and sacrifices rendered by the self-sacrificing martyrs of the Islamic Revolution and the imposed war. At the start of the ceremony a message from Imam Khomeyni, leader of the revolution and the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was read out by Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni. The text of the message is as follows:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. On the eve of God's Day, 11 February, the anniversary of Satan's defeat at the hands of the righteous army of God, we, the writers, speakers, and preachers, if we wish to describe the value of actions rendered by our martyrs and selfless combatants of the divine route, their self-sacrifices and the outcome of those sacrifices and devotions, we may have to concede and admit our incapability to describe their spiritual, humane, and divine values. Therefore, we can only speak of some of the apparent and obvious outcomes of these sacrifices, a task that will involve an impossible comprehensive evaluation.

When you begin to study a nation's revolution and its aftermath, studying it deeply and impartially, you will understand the extent of the chaos and interruptions that can occur throughout that revolutionary country; in such a situation, to attain a minimum order requires many years. That revolutionary nation will have to suffer for a long time from famine and shortages, acute diseases, clashes throughout the country, plunder, robbery, homicide. and murder, corruption, and many other assorted problems -- that is the circumstances in which a revolution is liable to be dependent on one or some of the major powers. However, the country of Iran, as a result of the nature of the Islamic Revolution -- that is to say that Islam was the masses' goal -- our revolution is a people's revolution and an independent one. Our revolution succeeded in forming a Revolution Council with a few committed persons, even before achieving its final victory and at a time when the government of the previous regime was still in power; indeed not only a Revolution Council was formed but also a transitional provisional government, and within a short period we were able to conduct several referendums and elections. The Islamic Republic regime was thus established and no famine ensued. Centers of corruption, corrupting people, wine bars, gambling clubs, pleasure houses, and all other illicit and illegitimate pursuits were speedly closed down and ended. Even efforts by minigroups, especially the Monafequin [Mojahedin-e-Khalq Organization] who tried to associate themselves with the revolution through the false stand that they supported the revolution, who then began to accumulate arms ammunition, and wealth through stealing in an unlimited and shrewd and malicious manner, and who later used the stolen arms against people, were crushed in a short time. These minigroups'remaining actions rank among the same issues that other large and small countries in the world are trying to fight; issues such as clashes and explosions. Not a single day passes without an explosion in a so-called civilized country in Europe, America, and other continents. Such incidents in Iran are identical to the same events taking place in those countries; of course the occurrence of those indicents are far less here.

The spiritual and material victory of the revolution is due to the Islamic nature of the revolution. The people have a devotion for Islam, and a great spiritual evolution created by God Almighty in a miraculous way has taken place in our nation, including among our dear youth throughout the country who suddenly found themselves undergoing a speedy spiritual and moral evolution, backed by the blessing of The Almighty, and were saved from sinking into a cesspool set up for them by the dirty world arrogance through people such as Reza Khan, Mohammad Reza Khan and other lackeys of the West or East.

Our youth have crossed the border in one night, a distance which required 100 years to cross. They suddenly achieved what the mystics and mystical poets have been dreaming of for many years; they translated the slogan of love for God Almighty into deeds and registered their true desire for martydom with their actions on the fronts in defending the dear Islam.

Today, the great Islam is witnessing the fruit of that dedication and sacrifice, a phenomenon that the world -- despite all the misleading propaganda and unlimited obstructions created to hinder it -- has no choice but to bow down to. This is the effect generated by Islam's spirituality that has come to this deprived country, a country so oppressed during the tyranic rule of its kings. We should pray to the Almighty to increase this holy effect to the extent that would include all other deprived, oppressed, and enslaved nations. Perhaps the sleepy governments of Islamic nations will be wakened, will realize, and understand their humane and conscientious tasks dictated by the divine will, and will stop persisting. These countries should note that it may be becoming too late for them, should they decide to stop their treason, to return to Islam and the ranks of the Islamic countries by ending the fight against the country that has devoted all its resources to the cause of divine and Islamic goals. They should make up for their past mistakes today, if not, tomorrow may be too late.

From the start of the offensive launched by the American Saddam against the Islamic homeland, these governments have been witnessing Saddam's shameful defeats with their own eyes and ears, and are still (?forgetful). I take refuge with God and his miracle. We all know that the policy pursued by the mass media, which is linked to the world-devouring governments, is biased to give a totally different and exaggerated picture of what actually takes place in Iran. Those media associate this revolutionary country, that wishes to live independently, with whatever is disgraceful.

The world today is troubled by devourers who are plundering the nations of the world and setting fire to their countries. The world is also troubled by those plunderers' associates who sacrifice their people and their nations' interest for the sake of the superpowers' interests. The world is troubled by the lackey organizations of the major powers, especially America, organizations with the empty titles of Security Council, Amnesty International, human rights, and other empty concepts, which are serving nobody but their creators -- the superpowers. What they do in fact is safeguard superpowers' interests and carry out a mission of condemning the world deprived and oppressed in the interests of the world-devouring major powers.

We all know and realize that it is now nearly 3 years that Saddam, with his savage onslaught, has continued to massacre, plunder and destroy Iran. From the start of the war he occupied and still occupies part of our country; he is still engaged in treacherous actions against deprived and innocent people, and those organizations did not take a single step toward condemning his actions. On a false pretence Saddam once spoke of wanting peace, and put forward a peace proposal precisely at the time when Iran was experiencing the blood-sucking Saddamists' incursions. With that satanical design he was determined as soon as possible to capture Khuzestan, and in attaining a major oil-rich source to set fire to this region with the support accorded to him by the world-devouring powers. Why? Because his bestial rebellious person does not recognize any limits, and as long as the region is not rid of him and his inauspicious presence there will be no stability. We all know well that with each day that passes Saddam's hand is further stained with the blood of hundreds of our innocent people. However the mass media and the organizations linked and associated to the world powers, especially America, continue to support Saddam's so-called, peace-loving statement, and give it and continue to give it publicity.

Saddam's peace-loving aspiration should be ranked along with the efforts rendered by America to create stability in the world, and with the deceitful actions of other powerful plunderers and so-called supporters of human rights. As long as the world is troubled with such peace-loving people, initiators of stability and supporters of human rights, there will be no peace, stability, and security in the world, and mankind will never achieve its true aspirations.

The only way for mankind to reach true freedom and prosperity is through the blessing of the divine school and its true devotees. The Jewish, the Christian, or the so-called Islamic governments, those who are linked and associated with the satanic powers, must realize that the harm they cause to the captive nations through their associations with the satanic powers is not less but more than the harm inflicted by superpowers themselves. The true friends of truth and humanity must think of something against this home-destroying scourge. I pray to God Almighty to save the world and its inhabitants from the trouble caused by those oppressors, to accord us more peace, stability, and prosperity, and to let our country achieve its aspiration, which is the emergence of the Mehdi, the hidden imam, peace be upon him, the establisher of justice and equality and the source of stability in the world.

JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER ISSUES COMMUNIQUES

Communique No 4

LD101145 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 10 Feb 83

[Communique No 4 issued by the Khata al-Anbiya Headquarters, center of joint operations of the Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran and Islamic Revolution Guards Corps]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. To destroy the Zionist enemy ruling Iraq and in continuation of the preliminary Wal Fajr operation, at 2100 last night the combatants of Islam -- while shouting "God is great" -- and the brave forerunners of the Islamic Revolution attacked enemy positions and dealt heavy blows to the forces of the Zionist regime of Iraq.

During this victorious operation, the 12th Brigade of Iraq's 3d Armored Division, including the Qadisiyah, (?Qotaybah), and (?Mu'tasim) Battalions and the 3d Mechanized Battalion which had been equipped with T-62 tanks, suffered heavy blows and was destroyed.

At 1055 today, an invading enemy plane was shot down by the mighty forces of Islam. Its pilot was captured by the combatants of Islam. A total of five enemy planes thus have been shot down since the start of the Wal Fajr operation.

During last night's operations several enemy personnel were either killed or wounded and several enemy tanks, personnel carriers, and vehicles were destroyed. Thanks to this victorious operation, the enemy organization has been disrupted. The destruction of the enemy forces in this region has resulted in chaos among Saddam's defeated forces.

In reply to the Saddamists' aggression against the land of the Islamic Revolution, the epic-making combatants of the army of Islam are adamant that their relentless fight against the Zionist rulers of Baghdad will continue until Iran's rightful conditions are fulfilled. Relying on God's endless might, they will not stop until final victory is achieved.

[Signed] The Khatam al-Anbiya Headquarters, center of joint operations of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps]

Communique No 5

LD101757 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 10 Feb 83

[Communique No 5 of the Khatam al-Anibiya Headquarters, joint operations center of the Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran and Islamic Revolution Guards Corps]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Proud and Muslim nation, following the victorious operations last night by the heroes of the army of Islam -- including the zealous combatants of the army and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps -- and simultaneous with the ceaseless efforts of the combatants of the reconstruction crusade aimed at the destruction of the infantry and mechanized combat forces of the Ba'thist-Zionist Iraqi Army in the operations zone and at removing obstacles and creating necessary facilities to continue the operations, heavy blows and losses were inflicted on the aggressive enemy's forces and combat structure. As a result, more than 60 percent of the 702d Infantry Brigade of the Iraqi 14th Division was completely destroyed. The Qadisiyah, Qotaybah, Mu'tasim, and the 3d Mechanized Battalions were destroyed and heavy blows were dealt at two Iraqi Popular Army battalions, named (Al-Muthanna) and (?Rijesar). Also the enemy (?Hetti) Commando Battalion was completely destroyed in the area south of the (Rushaydah) post and one battalion of the Iraqi 505th Infantry Brigade also was completely smashed.

During last night's operations of our victorious combatants, which were launched in the continuation of the first preliminary stage of the Wal Fajr operations, more than 40 enemy tanks and personnel carriers were completely destroyed and more than 60 enemy vehicles were set on fire and completely destroyed. Heavy blows also were dealt to the enemy's infantry forces. More than 2,500 of the Saddamist criminals were killed or wounded.

During these operations, dozens of enemy POW's were transferred behind the front.

With the hope for final victory.

[Signed] The Khatam al-Anbiya Headquarters, joint operations center of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps and Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE NO 1,214

LD101832 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 10 Feb 83

[Communique No 1,214 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. May the auspicious anniversary of the glorious victory of the Islamic Revolution be full of blessings for the great savior of humanity, His Holiness Mahdi. May God hasten his noble advent, for his right deputy Imam Khomeyni, for the combative and martyr-nurturing Iranian notion and for all Muslims and oppressed throughout the world.

According to reports, another intruding enemy aircraft was shot down by our forces' fire over the Wal Fajr operations zone at 1044 today. This brings the total of downed Iraqi aircraft to six since the beginning of the initial Wal Fajr operations.

In the past 24 hours, the truth-seeking combatants of Islam, continuing their brave and heroic attacks in the Wal Fajr area, have dealt more heavy blows to the Saddamist forces and destroyed part of the enemy's fortifications, killing a number of Iraqi servicemen. They are at present defending their guarded zones in their positions.

Simultaneous with the activities of our heroes in this region, the forces of Islam also made effective efforts toward destroying the enemy on the country's western fronts. On the Ilam and Bakhtaran border fronts, our forces opened fire on enemy positions, destroying 1 of the aggressors' tanks and more than 10 slit trenches and foxholes, and killing at least 30 Iraqi militarymen.

In the Shur-e Shirin area, an enemy patrol group trying to penetrate our forces' positions came under intense heavy weapons fire, suffered losses, and causalties and was forced to flee. In an area opposite Dehloran, the artillery and heavy weapon fire of the combatants of Islam set fire to two slit trenches of the enemy together with their crew. On the Marivan front, the Saddamists' positions in the (Kukhlan). Tutman and Diyalah areas came under fire, the enemy's movements were stopped, and his weapons fire silenced.

During exchanges of fire on the Abadan and Khorramshahr fronts, our combative units destroyed 1 ammunition dump and 12 slit trenches and foxholes of the Iraqi militarymen and killed or wounded a number of the enemy servicemen. Yesterday the criminal Saddamist mercenaries brought the city of Abadan under intense heavy and long-range weapons fire, destroying three houses, martyring two of our compatriots, and wounding five citizens of Abadan.

[Signed] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

IRNA REPORTS ON FIGHTING ON WESTERN FRONTS

GF101826 Tehran IRNA in English 1615 GMT 10 Feb 83

[Text] Bakhtaran, Feb 10 (IRNA) -- Thirty Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded as the enemy's positions and strongholds came under heavy fire by the Islamic combatants which also destroyed 11 group bunkers and dug-outs, one tank and two vehicles in the western fronts over the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile the Iranian troops maintained the upper hand during heavy weapons fire exchanges in most of the said battlefronts over the same period.

POLICE FOIL GUERRILLA ATTACK AGAINST EMBASSY

NC101632 Paris AFP in English 1548 GMT 10 Feb 83

[Text] Tehran, Feb 10 (AFP) -- A guerrilla attack against a foreign embassy here Tuesday was foiled by police, according to Iranian Attorney General Hojjat ol-Eslam Hoseyn Musavi Tabrizi. He told the daily newspaper KEYHAN that the group -- minority fedayeen led by Ashraf Deghani, currently hiding in Kordestan -- aimed to seize the embassy or kill the ambassador. He did not specify which embassy was targeted by the attack, and diplomatic circles here said they were unaware of any such incident.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Tabrizi said one of the assailants was killed by police, seven arrested immediately and others detained later on.

Tuesday, February 8, marked the 11th anniversary of the beginning of armed struggle by the Ashraf Deghani wing of the minority fedayeen. An attack against the West German ambassador here on February 8 last year was claimed by the group in protest against "West German imperialist reconstruction aid to Iran's repressive regime". The ambassador, Jens Petersen, was saved only by the fact that he was riding in a bullet-proof car at the time of the attack.